

## Church and City - I

*"And I saw the holy city."*

How can any mind wrestle with the unimaginableness of a great city, and its crowded loneliness! Not even Blake could realize London and live; a glimpse charred his eyes. Let any one try to see New York, not in fragments but entire, all its immensities swept together before the imagination, a shoreless sea of humanity tossing up to the astonished skies its grey billows of stone, and he will feel the chill of an impalpable despair. What a monstrous maelstrom, in which the individual is like a tiny wavelet on a lonely sea.

Try to see Philadelphia in imagination! What streams of people, eager, busy, hurried, harried, or happy; behind each face a romance or a tragedy, each life a blend of irony, agony, faith, fear and fleeting gayety; all winning or failing, all serving or adding to the burden of the world; saints doing good and lives sold to sin; mirth, misery and magnificence strangely mingled—only God can see a great city and not be dismayed of heart by its endless opportunity and its aching need.

—JOSEPH FORT NEWTON.

St. James's Church, Philadelphia

Advent, 1934



## CHURCH AND CITY—I.

A few years ago, St. James's Church achieved some fame by announcing that having been a "Parish" Church for one hundred and ten years, it proposed to turn itself into a "City Church". The term "City Church" struck the public imagination and the question asked by hundreds of people was "What is a 'City Church'?" For our own people we made answer in several pamphlets issued from time to time over a period of three or four years; but the question is still asked and the time seems ripe for another try at answering it.

During this month of December with its Advent and Christmas seasons, we Clergy of St. James's are making a special effort to deepen and strengthen the religious life of our people because the month brings to a close our celebration of the 125th year of our Church's history. Part of this effort is directed towards a better and clearer understanding of our enterprise, and to this end we are printing a series of five short statements covering every phase of it.

We remember, of course, that the Christian Church is not a mere institution—that churches come and go, are built and torn down again while the Church, the Living Body of Christ, lives on till time shall be no more. But we remember, too, that the Church has its institutional side and we make no apologies for directing attention to it.

When the thirteen colonies became the United States of America, it was commonly supposed that the English Church would disappear along with the other parts of the English government. That Church had had a precarious existence here and there—in Virginia, in New York, in Pennsylvania—for one hundred and seventy-five years (since 1607). It was unorganized; there was no Bishop,



no Diocese, just a number of separate churches and ministers. A very few Churchmen after the Revolution kept the faith and began to plan for such changes as would bring their church into line with the new order. Amongst these men, and chief amongst them, was William White, born in Philadelphia in 1748. Amongst them, too, was Samuel Seabury, up in Connecticut. The Connecticut clergy (there were a dozen of them) elected Seabury their Bishop. He crossed the ocean and was consecrated in Aberdeen on November 14th, 1784, just one hundred and fifty years ago. White, ordained in 1772 in London, was Rector of Christ Church, Chaplain of Congress, already a leader. Elected Bishop of Pennsylvania, he was consecrated in London in 1787, and came back to organize not only his Diocese but the "Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America", over which, as Presiding Bishop, he ruled until his death in 1836.

Bishop White was "city-minded". Philadelphia was the largest city in the country and by far the most important. The Diocese embraced the whole Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, but the Bishop's genius for organization and administration found its field in this city. He founded the "Philadelphia Dispensary", the "Episcopal Academy"—both of which are still in existence. He was Rector of Christ Church and of St. Peter's Church as well as Bishop, and his penetrating insight led him to administer these churches through one clerical staff and one Vestry. When the growth of population called for a new church, that church (St. James's) was founded, built, equipped and staffed by the same organization which thus became the "United Congregations of Christ Church, St. Peter's and St. James's".

This capable and sensible method of administering the Church in a city, resulted in St. James's being a full grown

church from the day it was opened. Our modern, haphazard way of setting up little dependent "Missions", some of which stay dependent and pitifully weak for years, liabilities rather than assets, is an unpleasant contrast.

Bishop White's plan for his city churches was not merely wise, it was truly *Episcopal*. The Bishop was the actual, not merely the theoretical "Father-in-God" amongst his people. The pastoral function of the Bishop was the uppermost one, kept so by the group of clergy through whom and with whom he worked.

The great Bishop died in 1836 and his city church plan died with him. St. James's had become "independent" in 1829 and St. Peter's followed suit in 1836. It is interesting, but valueless practically, to speculate on what might have been the history of the Episcopal Church in Philadelphia had the plan been continuously developed.

Between Bishop White's death and the opening of the present century, Episcopal churches in Philadelphia (the old City: "Pine to Vine between the Rivers") multiplied, but without any sort of plan. St. James's itself is perhaps the most instructive example. Originally on 7th Street between Chestnut and Market, it moved to its present site in 1869. Holy Trinity Church was already established at 19th Street, and it is extremely difficult to discover any sort of wisdom or breadth of vision in the planting of St. James's just three blocks West on the same street. What is easy to discover is that in those days each church thought of itself as an institution belonging to, supported by, and run for the benefit of a select group of people who owned or paid rent for its pews. If, through the "encroachment of business", the group moved, its church went with it. Further evidence of this idea of a church is found in the establishment of "free Chapels". Most Philadelphia churches of the '60s and '70s set up such "Chapels" as places to which the



"poor" might resort, leaving the pews in the churches for the pew holders.

Until about 1910, central Philadelphia had a sufficiently large population of the pewholding sort to keep most of the central churches going, though already some of the smaller ones had moved out of the district. By that time, too, a colossal blunder had been made in the abandonment by the Church of the Epiphany of its magnificent site at 15th and Chestnut Streets, and its amalgamation with St. Luke's Church at 13th below Spruce. "Colossal blunder"—why? Because, from the standpoint of religion in the great city that Philadelphia had become, that site was truly strategic. Had it been held, had there been any true vision of the Church's power and the Church's function in City life, there would today be in the very heart of greater Philadelphia, an Episcopal Church that might easily duplicate the somewhat similarly placed Trinity Church in New York, or St.-Martin's-in-the-Fields in London.

From 1910 to the present time, the central churches of Philadelphia have declined steadily in numbers, in influence and in power. No longer are they, as they used to be, the central sources of energy, of gifts, of inspiration for the Episcopal Church in the Diocese. Each is by itself struggling for existence, working at its own "problem" with no particular thought of the others. Each is, to a greater or less extent, in competition with the others. When the "problem of the central churches" is discussed, as it is now discussed more and more insistently, the first statement one hears is "There are too many of them". The discussion, thus started, develops into talk about "amalgamations" or "consolidations"—idle talk for two reasons: (1) there is no central authority to compel amalgamation; and (2) two conspicuous attempts at amalgamation made within the last three years have failed completely.

It is perhaps worth while to remark at this point that we have no slightest intention or desire to be critical of anything except a situation in which all of us have a share. Our hope is that by such frank examination we may help towards a wider understanding of it, for upon this alone, we believe, must be based any large, wide-visioned handling.

If we continue to think in terms of dollars and of property values, we shall probably continue to think (without action) until there are neither dollars nor property. If, on the other hand, we put such matters aside for later consideration; if we, "not disobedient to the heavenly vision", develop courage and energy to think in terms of Christ in the Metropolis; if we toil and pray as His friends who wish God's cause to have worthy witness in the midst of all the noise and smoke; if we learn to see our own Church made ready for a glorious adventure for God,—then we shall be on the way to such a solution of our "problem" as will take root downward and bear fruit upward.

So, until next week, we leave it. We ask that you not merely read and re-read what we have written, but study it and honestly think about the points here raised until they have become part of your mental furniture.



our buildings, and at the same time 225 people were in the candlelit Church listening to an organ recital. On the previous Saturday afternoon and evening, 100 men were in the Church for four "Quiet Hours" under the inspiring direction of the Bishop of Vermont. On Tuesday afternoon, Dr. Ayer lectured to 20 women. On Wednesday morning there was a group in the Church studying the Prayer Book. In the afternoon and evening many hundreds of people were in the Guild House at a Bazaar under the auspices of the "Daughters of the British Empire" who have met regularly there for twenty years. All day long, three times each week, a "Cooperative Soup Kitchen" distributes food to some hundreds of needy people. There are some, but by no means all, of the groups, small and large, using our facilities on these few days. They are here put down as instances of this everyday meeting of city needs.

Here, for this week, we stop. If what has been said is quietly and carefully pondered, the field and the task of the City Church should become, at least in outline, clear and definite; and it is hoped that the greatness of both field and task, the crying need of the one and the full accomplishment of the other, may spur us on in faith and with high courage to renewed prayer and labor.

## Church and City—II

*"For the sake of the House of the Lord."*

Once upon a time a man came to a great city full of mansions of freestone and marble, each vying with the other in splendor. But in the heart of the city there stood a house of another order of architecture, simple in its dignity and vine-covered. He marveled at it. It had no stays, no props; and he wondered how it kept standing.

When, after a hundred years, his son came to the city the palaces had vanished, and others of a new style had risen in their places. But lo! the old House still stood, unchanged, as if the tooth of time which breaks everything else had broken itself on that. Again, after a hundred years it was so. The old House was still standing while all else was new.

Out of the palaces came many sick people and the streets were full of the weary and heavy-laden, whom no physician healed. But whoever went into the old House that seemed, like them, itself to need a physician, came out sound and glad. For in the House dwelt One who laid His hands upon the sick and weary, and they were made whole.

So stands the Church of God in the City of Man. Soon or late, wistful and lonely of heart, weary of seeking without finding and journeying without arriving, man will turn aside from the noisy street into the House of Peace, and find a secret sought in vain but given to the humble of spirit.

—JOSEPH FORT NEWTON.

St. James's Church, Philadelphia

Advent, 1934



## CHURCH AND CITY—II.

The City of Philadelphia as a whole, with its nearly 2,000,000 people, presents to the Church an astonishingly varied set of opportunities and tasks. Within its limits there are one or two churches that can, without too great a strain on the imagination, be called country churches; there are several "suburban" parishes; there are churches placed in the midst of teeming but localised populations (as in Kensington and Frankford); there are churches, once "prosperous", surrounded by foreign-born people and now languishing; there are churches for Negroes, for Italians. They are all, in a very real sense, city churches, for they are all within the city's limits. Many of them demand specialized work of one sort or another, and are getting it. Nowhere is there to be found braver and more capable service than is being given by these churches, often in the face of all but insurmountable difficulties.

The "Living Church Annual" for 1934 lists 125 Episcopal churches, missions and chapels as within the city limits. In the other four counties of the Diocese, the total is 99, and of these about 25 are just on the edge of the city.

It is amongst this large number of churches that the eight "central city" churches form a very special group. From the standpoint of spiritual value it is entirely possible that no one of them is more important than a tiny church with a handful of people. God does not reckon by mere size and bigness. From the standpoint of their own field, however, they have a central importance matched by a correspondingly central responsibility. It is the purpose of this second "Church and City" statement to describe their field and their task.



Central Philadelphia is undergoing a giant transformation that has been but slightly slowed down even in these last "depression" years. The character of this vast process is of interest to the Church even more than its size.

What is happening is not the revamping of the district so as to make it more convenient as a place in which to work and to shop. It is not the destruction of "residence" districts and their replacement by "business". There is being created here a cultural centre that will soon make central Philadelphia as famous for its splendor and dignity as Philadelphia's suburbs have long been for their extent, their comfort and their beauty. The Art Museum, the Library, the Franklin Institute are temples of the arts and sciences; the expanding hospitals with their great research laboratories are Philadelphia's witnesses to its thought and care for the sick, the promotion of health and the overcoming of disease; the huge new hotels, apartment houses and clubs are meeting the demands of city folk for residence and convenience; these all, no less than the banks, office buildings and shops are embodiments of a rich and varied communal life, and an increasingly populous one.

It is this population that is our special concern as Churchmen. The hotels and apartment houses flanking Rittenhouse Square hold more people than ever the old residences did—more of the same sort of people, determined to have a foothold where once their fathers and grandfathers dwelt.

The slight survey of the field taken in connection with what was said last week about the central churches suggests that of all the elements of the city's life, religion alone, though theoretically central, seems unable to meet the needs of, or to obtain a worthy place in, central Philadelphia.

There may be those who are complacent about this. It may be said, it is said, that if the congregation of any particular church leaves, it should move or should simply fade away. It is certainly true that the old fashioned "Parish" church with its pew rents, its concentration on its own preservation, its dependence upon a selected group of "supporters" has no place or function in the heart of a metropolis; but it is no less true that if the Church fails in our great cities, it fails everywhere. The Christian Church was born in a great city, "Tarry ye in the City of Jerusalem until ye be witnesses unto me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria and unto the uttermost parts of the earth". "Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day; and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem". These words of the Founder of our religion are examples of His insight. The Apostle St. Paul, "traveller and Roman citizen" was a consummate city strategist, moving to Antioch, to Ephesus, to Corinth, to Athens, ever looking backward to Jerusalem and forward to Rome, the world's centre, the supreme city to which he came as a prisoner and in which he suffered martyrdom.

The "problem of the central churches" is not incidental. It goes deep into the very meaning of religion. It becomes the question, "Has the Christian Church *any* place in the heart of a great city?" And our answer becomes the true "yardstick" by which the value we set upon our religion is inevitably and infallibly measured.

What one sees with a thrill of pride and admiration in Philadelphia is that its citizens are determined, in the twentieth century as in the eighteenth, that the "amenities" of life—music, painting, reading, science and the rest—shall



have worthy, even lavish, embodiment. To assure this they have poured out great gifts, established noble foundations, given of themselves in high services.

In sharp contrast to this, one sees that the very same people appear to be without conviction as to the necessity of similar embodiments of religion. It is taken for granted that a City Orchestra, a City Library, a City Museum must have a staff of specialists, a City Hospital its research departments; but a City Church must content itself with the machinery and methods of seventy years ago.

In this last statement it is implied that the City Church should be maintained on a scale commensurate with the cultural, institutional and personal life surrounding it. The implication must be made explicit, and this can perhaps best be done by outlining one conception of what such a church might be and might do.

1. First and foremost it stands as a witness to God, to the saving power of His Son Jesus, to the indwelling grace of His Spirit, "where cross the crowded ways of life". It is meaningless otherwise. Central Philadelphia does not particularly need a forum for religious discussion. It does not need, or want, a place of religious entertainment. But central Philadelphia does very greatly need a place or places "fenced off from the distracting bustle of existence, filled with an atmosphere and with suggestions that make it easier for those who go there to realize the worshipping life".

2. It must be "free" to all, as the Library or the Museum is "free". To be thus "free" in central Philadelphia is relatively as costly for a church as for the Museum. It is absurd to suppose that such a church can, or should, be supported by the casual gifts of its increasingly

transient attendants as that the Museum or the Pennsylvania Hospital or the Orchestra should be similarly supported. This "freeness" is essential—a fact not widely enough or clearly enough known. The people who throng the city's centre will not rent pews in a church, nor will they go often to a church which is not "free".

3. The City Church must be staffed, not by a "Rector" and one or more "Curates", but by a group of Clergy with diversified functions. This again is essential. There is no magic to make the minister of Christ a universal genius. In Paoli, in Radnor, in Bridesburg are faithful and able clergy—"general practitioners", the envy and the admiration of their brethren in Central Philadelphia. In the City Church, as in the City Hospital, specialization is inevitable, and should be demanded by layfolk. This feature of the City Church should not be thought of as the "dream" of a "visionary ecclesiastic". It is, on the contrary, a simple, practical hardheaded necessity. The wonder is that the very same people who in courts, in banks, in railroads, in hospitals assume this necessity, take it for granted, fail to see that if the church in the city is to be effective, preaching must be done by preachers, pastoral work by pastors, teaching by teachers, administrative work by administrators, and so on.

4. The City Church is not a Sunday Church—it is an every day Church. On weekdays as on Sundays, the City Church is at worship and at work. In teaching, in community work, in the "ministry of music", in personal contacts with individuals, in group contacts, it must be ceaselessly active. At St. James's these "group contacts" cover a wide and varied field. On a recent Monday evening the Diocesan Altar Guild had a large meeting in one part of



Will our readers go through all three of our "Church and City" statements together? The twenty or more pages should present some outlines at least of the "City Church" enterprise centering at St. James's, and should stir up in their minds the vision of a solidly conceived and vitally necessary undertaking in the Name of Our Lord who once "beheld the city and wept over it, saying 'If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong to thy peace!'"

Along with this third "Church and City" chapter is sent our regular annual statement and appeal for the support of St. James's for the year 1935. For this we ask your serious consideration, your prompt and generous response.

Finally, we remind you that two more "Church and City" statements are planned, to be issued next week and the week after.

## Church and City—III

*"And I saw no temple therein."*

The late George Tyrrell wrote many a shining sentence, as for example: "God will not ask us, What sort of Church have you lived in? but What sort of Church have you longed for?" Some of us long for a Church as lofty as the love of God, as ample as the need of man, incarnating a Gospel so simple that a little child can understand it, and so profound that a philosopher cannot fathom its depth.

The world waits for a creative, compassionate, compelling Christian love, interpreted by a penetrating spiritual intelligence; a love militant in its intense, persistent, undiscourageable goodwill, mediated in strategic, tender, ministrant fellowship to individuals and groups—a union of those who care in the service of those who need; a love willing to walk the high, pitiful way of the Cross in obedience to its vision.

Such love never faileth, even in face of force, hate and dark fatality: it is equal to the cruelty, cunning and cupidity of man; it outlasts life and time and death. It is thus that the seer saw no temple in the City of God, because the City itself has become a Temple—its streets paths of purity, its mansions homes of beauty, pity and praise; the social incarnation of God, redeemed humanity the Body of Christ.

—Joseph Fort Newton.

**St. James's Church, Philadelphia**

**Advent, 1934**



### “CHURCH AND CITY—III”

The “Diocese of Pennsylvania” is a misnomer, but one that is easily explained. When the Diocese was founded one hundred and fifty years ago, it did comprise the whole commonwealth; but as the years have gone on and the population has grown, new Dioceses have been set up,—Pittsburgh, Harrisburg, Bethlehem and Erie,—the area of the old Diocese each time growing smaller while always it kept its old name. Actually the “Diocese of Pennsylvania” consists of but five counties,—Philadelphia, Delaware, Chester, Montgomery and Bucks. It is one of the smallest of Dioceses in area, one of the largest in population. Its population is concentrated, to a greater degree than elsewhere, in a single city. It is actually more exclusively urban than is the Diocese of New York.

It is well to remember this when we are thinking about Philadelphia’s central churches. They are central, not only in a civic sense but in a Diocesan, the Diocese in which they are central being second only to New York in the whole Episcopal Church.

The population growth of the Diocese is just the expansion of Philadelphia and its suburbs. In the suburbs there are vigorous churches. Amongst them are to be found Parishes of great strength that have been built up by the removal of former members of the central churches, and by the general increase in suburban population. It is our contention, however, that these splendid Parishes can never, without irreparable damage to the Diocese, take the place of the central churches.

A suburban church is exactly what its name implies—the church of a suburb. It may be, and often is, a church of great power and influence. It is, however, no more a



substitute for the City Church than the suburban bank is for the Girard Trust Company, the Overbrook Station for the Pennsylvania Terminal, the "Naborhood Store" for Wanamaker's, the local movie for the Aldine Theatre, or the community Country Club for the Penn Athletic Club.

We have been sometimes criticized for our statements as to the decline of the central churches in these last years. The statements are based on statistics to be found in the Journals of the Diocesan Convention. These for all the eight churches we have studied for all the years from 1900 to 1933. Here, for instance, are the group figures of communicant members and of Sunday School scholars for the years 1917, 1927 and 1933.

	Communicants	Sunday School Scholars
1917:	8618	1907
1927:	7033	1154
1933:	5267	788

Now it is commonly supposed that this central city loss is compensated for by growth in the suburban parishes. If this be the case, *Diocesan* figures will continue to show growth in spite of the central city decreases. Diocesan figures are to be found in the "Living Church Annual". In the 1934 edition the communicants are: "Last year 73,020, present number, 72,667, decrease 353", and if other years are studied it will be found that instead of the common supposition being correct, the truth is that *as go the city churches, so goes the Diocese*. Indeed, there is statistical ground for the assertion that the curve of growth or decline in the central churches is not very far from that in the Diocese when increase in population is taken into account.

The value of such statistics from our point of view is that they support our conviction as to the critical impor-

tance *for the Diocese* of the "problem of the central churches". But it ought to be clearly understood that we use them for no other purposes than (1) to arouse keener interest in the "problems" and (2) to justify our own vigorous efforts to have the enterprise in which we at St. James's are engaged understood and supported.

It is the simple fact that our chief interest at St. James's is not at all the "saving of St. James's". We have more than once put St. James's in jeopardy when there appeared to be the chance of a larger, more effective and more economical "City Church" project than by ourselves we could manage.

From what has now been said, it will appear that, rightly or wrongly, and after the most careful study of both church and city, we believe ourselves to be contending for a constructive idea.

The odds against us are considerable. Because we are a "Parish" church technically, we must carefully observe the limitations of that status. Contrary to popular superstition, St. James's endowment income is negligible. When five years ago we abandoned the pew rent system, we sacrificed income amounting to \$13,000 annually. The result is that we have to depend for our financial support wholly upon the gifts of those to whom alone, as a "Parish" church, we have the right to appeal,—which means that we have to spend overmuch time and labor on this severely practical part of our work.

On the other hand, we have comforting and strengthening evidences that our "City Church" idea does actually work and that understanding of it is growing.

Some five years ago, at the request of the Bishop, we took over the management of S. Elisabeth's Church in South Philadelphia. It was a church literally *in extremis*.



Acting upon our plan of having an adequate staff, and through some large individual gifts, we put three clergy at work with immediate and encouraging results. For three years in succession St. Elisabeth's had the largest number of persons confirmed and received into the Church, in the Diocese. When the "depression" came, we had to give up all connection with this work; but just recently, through the energy of the Priest-in-charge and with the aid of a large number of friends, some of them St. James's people, enough money was raised to assure the continuance of the splendid work for at least two years, and it looks as though this Church were permanently saved.

A little more than a year ago, we made a connection with St. Mary's Church in West Philadelphia at a time when it was in difficulties. The connection has become permanent through the election of one of St. James's Co-Rectors as Rector of St. Mary's and through an arrangement whereby the two vestries have close affinities. No financial obligations whatever have been, or will be, undertaken by St. James's; but already St. Mary's has two resident clergy, one of them Student Pastor at the University and there is every prospect for steady growth in usefulness for this fine church.

About two years ago, at the request of a newspaper syndicate, Dr. Newton began the writing of a short daily religious piece. So wide has been the demand, that Dr. Newton's words are now going out in newspapers that have an aggregate circulation of 3,500,000.

All three of these bits of work are characteristic "City Church" activities, made possible because of the "diversified ministry" of a group of clergy, and growing out of the discoverable religious needs and opportunities of the people of a metropolis. They are three out of very many such

opportunities constantly presenting themselves, opportunities which, alas, we are compelled to let slip away because they demand a larger staff than we are able to support. One of these as yet untouched opportunities we think should be mentioned. For two or three years a group of women having no connection whatever with St. James's Church have been conducting a "Co-operative Soup Kitchen" in our Guild House. They have done an immense amount of good, not only in distributing food to hundreds of people, but in making many hundreds of visits in the homes of their clients. It is a fine bit of definitely limited social service work. It is, however, limited not merely in its extent but in its scope. Many of these people need spiritual food quite as much as physical: but the giving of this is a matter that requires specialized skill. Toning up morally weakened lives, applying to them the "comfortable Gospel of Christ" is a task made especially for a City Church, for these people are city people; but to accomplish the task demands an alliance between clergy and trained social workers. Leaders, amongst these latter, professional people of high standing, have definitely appealed to us for such an alliance so that there may be attempted here at St. James's an entirely fresh approach to the full-rounded dealing with the city's underprivileged people. Social workers know that without the Christian religion all their skill and all their science avail little. We clergy know that the specialized technique of the Social Worker is essential to effective dealing with those thousands of God's children who in this city, within easy reach of us, need new motive, new power, new life. But we are not able to undertake this terribly needed and most promising work because not yet do our people make it possible.



In the beginning of this statement we said plain words about a popular idea of "The Church." Its worst manifestation is that it does nothing to cast out the demon of "defeatism" which possesses us more than most of us realize. But who can calculate the rousing effect of a concrete victory in a definite Church when it has a very hard job to do? "Defeatism" anywhere is just plain anti-Christian. Christ was, and is, a Victor. His Spirit casts out fear and defeat and the proof of this is, and is only, in the daring forward accomplishments of those who are His disciples.

Our money challenge thus becomes a part, and a very testing part, of our whole City Church enterprise. Success means more than a sum of money. It means one further step towards enthroning our Lord in the heart of the great city.

If our statements have been read and pondered, the gifts will pour in: glad Christmas gifts to Him who "for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven."

## Church and City—IV

*"Let us now go even unto Bethlehem."*

Eternal Father, as we bow at the Cradle of Jesus, in Whom Thou hast shown us what Thou art in a life like our own, humbly we give thanks for the wonder of what He was, for His words of truth and works of mercy, and the hand of blessing He laid upon every cradle. Let there be in us a new nativity of faith and hope and joy, and that wise charity which thinketh no evil, touching us to a gentler thought, a holier mood, and a more liberal devising in behalf of those who know the bitterness of want.

If we are alone, may we seek some one to bless in the spirit of Him Who is the greatest blessing; some one to remember in the name of Him Who is the gentlest memory of the world. Hasten the day when His truth shall fill the hard old earth with shapes of beauty and gladness, as of old His coming filled the sky with forms of light and song. Grant us, when it may be, a heart of joy, and when it may not be, a faith that floweth like a river that goeth softly to sea.

Not for one day, but for all the days do we invoke a spirit of heavenly vision, of wistfulness in joy, of happiness in service of those in whom, however dimly, Thou dwellest. Our lives are but a muddled memory of what they ought to be; teach us to give all that we are to Him Who gave His all to us, and Who will make us, if we let Him have His way with us, such little ones of Thine as we never yet have been. In His name, Amen.

—Joseph Fort Newton.

St. James's Church, Philadelphia

Advent, 1934



#### "CHURCH AND CITY—IV"

A generation that is responsible for the World War, for the madness that had its nadir in 1929, for the greatest human wastage in unemployment ever known, would be wise to consider what it is doing with its churches. There is an insistent and persistent belief that the root of our trouble is "spiritual," that its remedy is to be found in "The Church." But "The Church," we say, is weak and goes haltingly. It is divided. It concerns itself with dead dogmas and dreary ceremonials.

This sort of talk is nauseatingly unreal; and "The Church" is the most unreal phrase in it. It is a pure figment of the imagination, a thing of straw, with no definable meaning at all. "The Church" when thus spoken of has no existence, no function, no value in the center of a metropolis or anywhere else.

Our plea, in this series of statements, concerns itself, not with so nebulous and worthless a thing, but with a quite definite institution embodying a clear spirit and purpose.

St. James's Church is a legal corporation under the name and style of "The Rector, Churchwardens and Vestrymen of St. James's Church in the City of Philadelphia." It is "in union with" the Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the Diocese of Pennsylvania. It owns property, chiefly a Church which has been "consecrated," a consecrated church being a building "set apart from all unhallowed, ordinary and common uses, dedicated to God's service, for the reading of His holy Word, for celebrating His holy Sacraments, for offering to His glorious Majesty the sacrifices of prayer and thanksgiving, for blessing the



people in His Name, and for all other holy offices." All this is as definite as debts, as concrete as a sidewalk.

But St. James's Church is also a spiritual or religious entity, a society, a fellowship. As such it has obligations, purposes, aims, as clear cut as a cameo. It is the fellowship of the friends of Jesus, each member of it solemnly consecrated to be "His faithful soldier and servant unto life's end." The obligation is to know and to do God's will; the purpose is to bring about on earth the establishment of God's Kingdom; the aim is to make all men brethren. All of these are high and hard; but all of them are unmistakably and intelligibly definite. St. James's Church, moreover, has all these things—obligations, purposes, aims, their method of fulfillment, their manner of attainment, and their motivating power, laid down in plain words in the Prayer Book.

So it is that when we strive to gain interest in and support for what we call our "City Church enterprise," we are treading on solid ground. We are not "mystics" or "visionaries," though we deal with heavenly mysteries and labor for the vision of God.

In three short statements we have been explaining a particular method or plan adopted, as we believe, to meet religious needs in the heart of a great and fascinating metropolis. For the plan itself, we claim nothing more than that it is sane, practical and sensible—that it is calculated to be effective in its particular field in setting forward the cause of Christ. For the working out of the plan we depend upon the prayers, the understanding, the good will and the practical support of those citizens whose sympathetic attention we can win and hold.

From January 1 to November 30, 1934, the aggregate attendance at all services in St. James's Church was 32,230.

In the same eleven months 5381 communions were made. In the eight days, Palm Sunday to Easter, total attendance at services was 3744.

In our Guild House, in the same period, while no actual count was made of its "population," attendance at its multitudinous meetings, at the "Soup Kitchen," etc., was certainly not less than 40,000.

Figures such as these are not in themselves of especial significance, though they indicate that even on our necessarily reduced scale of operation a sizable work is going on day in and day out; but they ARE significant as illustrating how very far indeed we are from the danger of dealing with misty unrealities. For us "The Church" is a continuous procession of people with whose most real needs in sickness and in health it is our glorious privilege to deal. To the individual our ministry is as definite as the doctor's: for groups, whether small ones in classes, or great ones at some special service, our capacity is taxed exactly as is that of the staff of a museum or a library.

The burden of the present statement is that about this enterprise of ours there is nothing "fancy" at all. With all our hearts we pray for God's guidance and God's blessing—day by day, quite literally and continuously we thus pray: but also we work in the spirit of our prayer. The work, the task, the whole project means continuous daily labor. Salaries and coal bills, music and insurance, printing and postage, insurance and debts have to be dealt with in a church as in a bank or a shop or a school. Concern over such things is as acute in a religious enterprise as in a "secular" one. In our particular case it happens that the financial aspect of our work is crucial. Why in our case more than in any other of the central churches?

There are several reasons:



1. We have a smaller income from endowment than any of them. Here are the figures:

St. Stephen's	\$29,074.78
Christ Church	27,996.13
St. Luke-Epiphany	24,289.72
Holy Trinity	21,460.94
St. Peter's	21,121.08
St. Mark's	17,044.93
St. Clement's	11,065.17
St. James's	10,460.48

2. Our expenses are larger than any of the others:

St. James's	\$41,799.64
Holy Trinity	34,151.31
St. Stephen's	32,514.28
St. Mark's	31,072.18
St. Luke-Epiphany	25,422.05
Christ Church	25,154.68
St. Clement's	19,287.75
St. Peter's	17,152.17

3. We have no income from pew rents, since all our seats are "free."
4. It takes a long time to get people to understand a new enterprise and to support it.
5. We depend almost wholly upon the current givings of our friends for the maintenance of this work.

For this calendar year of 1934 we have a very definite and a very hard financial programme. If we can carry it out in full we believe that our worst financial difficulties will have been met. Already we have announced a greatly reduced budget for 1935, so that everything depends upon our success in our 1934 transactions.

Last May we set out to raise, in celebration of our 125th year, a special fund of \$25,000. May is not a good time to start such an effort, but we had immediate generous response. Half of the required sum, \$12,500, was subscribed by a very few people. To get the rest the "Chart" was devised and set up in the Church. On it are our 125 years—1809 to 1933. Each year represents \$100. The plan is to get each year blocked out either by a single gift, or by a group of gifts. A handsome book is being provided in which the names of all givers (*not*, of course, the amount of their gifts) will have permanent record. Gifts may be:

\$100.00 for a whole year
50.00 for half a year
25.00 for a quarter of a year
8.50 for a month
2.00 for a week.

Each gift, for whatever period, is complete in itself and each giver is invited to choose the year he desires. It makes no difference if on the Chart the year anyone wants is blocked out. In the *Book* there will be room for as many gifts for any one year as are made.

It is our hope that at the "Watchnight" Service on New Year's Eve (December 31, 11:15 P. M.), the Chart may be completely filled and ceremonially carried out of the Church.

At the time of writing \$7200 has been given or promised; \$5300 has still to be got. Is this possible? Of course it is! Just over one hundred people have given anything. Some of them have given a week, some a month, some a quarter of a year, and so on. The thing can be done if the many hundreds who have not yet given will do it now.